DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 372 484 EA 025 964

TITLE	Public Hearing, National Education Commission on Time and Learning: The Extended School Program and Its Impact on the Community. Southeastern Regional Hearing Summary (2nd, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, October 22, 1992).
INSTITUTION	National Education Commission on Time and Learning, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	22 Oct 92
NOTE	29p.; For a briefing paper, related hearings, and research findings, see EA 025 962-971.
PUB TYPE	Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; *Extended School Day; *Extended School Year; Flexible Scheduling; Hearings; Nontraditional Education; *School Schedules; *Time Factors (Learning); *Year Round Schools
IDENTIFIERS	*National Education Commission on Time and Learning

ABSTRACT

The National Education Commission on Time and Learning (NECT&L) is authorized by Public Law 102-62, the Education Council Act of 1991. The Commission is holding a series of hearings across the United States to examine the quality and adequacy of study and learning time of elementary and secondary students. This paper summarizes the evening portion of the second public hearing which focused on the impact of the Murfreesboro Extended School Program on the community. Four panel discussions were conducted, each with question-and-answer sessions. Participants in the first panel discussion included: (1) Jerry Benefield, President and CEO, Nissan Motor Manufacturing Corporation; (2) Joel Jobe, Managing Partner, Jobe, Turley, and Associates, Murfreesboro, Tennessee; and (3) Ralph Vaughn, Executive Director, Rutherford/Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce. The second panel discussion featured: (1) Beth Callaway, League of Women Voters; (2) Beth Atkins, Extension Agent, Urban 4-H, University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service; and (3) Monica Lewis, Director, Extended School, Bedford County Board of Education, Bedford County. Discussants in the third panel discussion included: (1) Jane Williams, Director, Professional Laboratory Experiences, Middle Tennessee State University; (2) Sue Bordine, Assistant Principal, Mitchell-Neilson Elementary School; and (3) Wendy Day Rowell, Extended School Program (ESP) Parent, Mitchell-Neilson Elementary Schools. Becci Bookner, Director, Extended School Program and Community Education, was the featured fourth-panel speaker. (LMI)

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SUMMARY

SECOND PUBLIC HEARING

NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION ON TIME AND LEARNING

The Extended School Program and its Impact on the Community

Southeastern Regional Hearing
Murfreesboro, Tennessee

October 22, 1992

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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PREFACE

The National Education Commission on Time and Learning (NECTL) is authorized by Public Law 102-62, the Education Council Act of 1991. The Commission began its work in April 1992 and will submit a final report to the Congress and the Secretary of Education in 1994. The Commission is holding hearings throughout the country to receive the views of the public, community groups, education professionals, interested individuals, and national associations. In examining the quality and adequacy of study and learning time of elementary and secondary students in the United States, the Commission is considering the following issues, among others:

- the length of the academic day and the academic year in elementary and secondary schools throughout the United States and in schools of other nations;
- the time children spend in school learning academic subjects such as English, mathematics, science, history, and geography;
- the use of incentives for students to increase their educational achievement in available instruction time;
- how children spend their time outside school with particular attention to how much of that time can be considered "learning time" and how out-of-school activities affect intellectual development;
- the time children spend on homework, how much of that time is spent on academic subjects, the importance that parents and teachers attach to homework, and the extent to which homework contributes to student learning;
- year-round professional opportunities for teachers and how teachers can use their time to acquire knowledge and skills that will permit them to improve their performance and help raise the status of the profession;
- how school facilities are used for extended learning programs;
- the appropriate number of hours per day and days per year of instruction for United States public elementary and secondary schools;
- if appropriate, a model plan for adopting a longer academic day and academic year for use by United States elementary and secondary schools by the end of this decade, including recommendations regarding mechanisms

to assist States, school districts, schools, and parents in making the transition from the current academic day and year to an academic day and year of a longer duration;

- suggestions for such changes in laws and regulation as may be required to facilitate States, school districts, and schools in adopting longer academic days and years; and

- an analysis and estimate of the additional costs, including the cost of increased teacher compensation, to States and local school districts if longer academic days and years are adopted.

The Commission is made up of nine members, the Secretary of Education, the House of Representatives, and the Senate each having appointed three. Dr. John Hodge Jones, Superintendent of Schools in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, chairs the Commission. Carol Schwartz is Vice Chair. She has served on the District of Columbia School Board and City Council. The other Commission members are:

Michael J. Barrett, State Senator, Massachusetts,

B. Marie Byers, past President of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education,

Christopher T. Cross, Executive Director of the Education Initiative of the Business Roundtable,

Denis P. Doyle, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute,

Norman E. Higgins, Principal of Piscataquis Community High School, Guilford, Maine,

Dr. William E. Shelton, President of Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and

Glenn R. Walker, Principal of Clifton-Clyde High School in Concordia, Kansas.

The Executive Director of the Commission is Dr. Milton Goldberg, the past Director of the Office of Research, U.S. Department of Education. Julia Anderson, formerly with the National Council on Vocational Education, is the Commission's Deputy Executive Director. The Research Coordinator for the Commission is Dr. Cheryl Kane, and Dr. Fritz Edelstein serves as a Senior Associate. Anita Madan Renton is the Commission's Research Associate for International Studies, and Emma Madison Jordan serves as its Administrative Officer.

INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of the evening portion of the second public hearing of the National Education Commission on Time and Learning. The evening hearing, which was held on October 22, 1992, in the Communications Building of Middle Tennessee State University, focused on the impact of the Murfreesboro's Extended School Program on the community. The event was hosted by Middle Tennessee State University, the Murfreesboro City Schools, South Central Bell, and the Rutherford Chamber of Commerce.

The material presented in this summary is not a substitute for comprehensive written documents and verbatim oral discussions. It is a synopsis to aid the Commissioners, interested individuals, and associations. The verbatim texts of the written and oral presentations can be obtained by writing to Julia Anderson, Deputy Executive Director, NECTL, 1255 22nd Street, N.W., Suite 502, Washington, D.C. 20202-7591.

OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Ralph Vaughn, Executive Director of the Rutherford/Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce, introduced Dr. James E. Walker, President of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). Dr. Walker spoke about our nation's need for the National Education Commission on Time and Learning. Mr. Jeff Phillips, President of the Rutherford/Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce, was then introduced. Mr. Phillips commented on the rapid growth of the Murfreesboro community and the business community's past and present support of the educational process.

Dr. John Hodge Jones, chairman of NECTL, opened the hearing by introducing the Commissioners.

FIRST PANEL DISCUSSION

Mr. Jerry Benefield, President and CEO, Nissan Motor Manufacturing Corp., USA, Smyrna, Tennessee

Mr. Benefield, representing Rutherford County's largest employer, presented a corporate perspective on Murfreesboro's Extended School Program (ESP). It is Mr. Benefield's belief that ESP is an outstanding example of how educational and social needs are being met in a business-smart way.

Nissan manages its resources so as to get the maximum results at the lowest cost. Corporations know time is money; a minute of down time costs thousands of dollars. Also, corporations design facilities to produce the most benefit and maximum use. In addition, as a corporate citizen, Nissan is sensitive to the needs of its employees and of the community.

This formula works for Nissan, but it is not always adopted in our schools. School systems, for the most part, are open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for 180 days — less than half of the year. All school services are expected to be delivered during this narrow window of operation. As a task force of the National Governors' Association noted, our country has a quarter of a trillion dollars tied up in school buildings — facilities that are practically unused three months of the year. The current system thus has many built-in inefficiencies.

ESP helps schools to overcome some of these inefficiencies. Mr. Benefield explained the benefits:

- 127 Nissan employees, plus employees from dozens of local businesses and organizations whose children are involved in the program, have peace of mind because of ESP.

- Small children are encouraged to like school.

- ESP uses Murfreesboro's excellent school facilities 12 hours a day, 12 months of the year. ESP capitalizes on the investment that has already been made in the buildings, particularly since it offers a lower cost day care alternative to families in the community.

- ESP complements the standard school program. The ESP day starts at 6:00 a.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m.—an important point to remember since 80 percent of school-age children have parents who work outside the home. Dependable child care is a must for those families.

- For employees who occasionally have to work overtime, ESP affords the security that their children are cared for in a safe and familiar environment.

- ESP operates during summer months and on snow days.

- ESP is totally integrated into the city school system. The school board ensures the integrity of its schools and the integrity and accountability of ESP.

- ESP is totally funded by the fees participating parents pay; there is no financial burden to the school system or local taxpayers.

- ESP makes sense from a purely objective standpoint. There are also subjective benefits—subjective in the sense that they support emotional or strictly personal objectives.

At Nissan, for example, family-friendly benefits make a powerful statement to employees. Nissan provides Dependent Care Reimbursement Accounts, flexible work options such as personal time off and personal leaves, an on-site recreation park and activity center, scholarship programs, and educational assistance. Nissan provides these benefits because employees who feel secure about their own welfare and their families' welfare are more satisfied employees.

According to Mr. Benefield, the strongest argument in favor of ESP is that it improves the educational system. Benefield recognizes the link between a good educational system and a competitive workforce. At Nissan, for instance, the technology used requires a well-trained, highly skilled workforce. Developing these skills, or at least the willingness to learn new skills, has to begin early, in elementary and junior high school. Programs such as ESP offer needed educational resources. They develop skills that will enable the automobile industry and others to compete effectively in the world marketplace.

Mr. Benefield once read that much of what we call education is merely the repetition of ritual, and that is not what education should be. To improve the educational system, or any system, solutions come about only when people consider new ideas and possibilities. That is how Nissan makes improvements, and that is how ESP was conceived. In 1985, when ESP was being developed, parents and school officials looked at the situation they faced and asked: "Why not? Why not use our school buildings as day care facilities? Why not tutor those children and help them complete their homework while they're there? Why not offer our services year-round? Why not give parents—and students—a day care solution that makes sense?"

Mr. Benefield feels that the country needs for more people to ask why not. The educational system cannot be improved by maintaining the status quo. The existence of NECTL is evidence that education is an issue all across our country. Mr. Benefield asked the Commission to keep ESP in mind as a low-cost and sensible response to two critical social needs: educational enrichment and quality day care.

Mr. Joel Jobe, Managing Partner, Jobe, Turley, and Associates, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Mr. Jobe said his accounting firm was probably one of the smallest businesses represented on the panel. The theme of Mr. Jobe's presentation was the impact of ESP on small business.

It is Mr. Jobe's belief that the private sector should take a leading role in addressing the challenge of child care. Mr. Jobe believes that flexible approaches at the local level can best serve local needs. If business people voluntarily respond to the challenging needs of their own workforce, some of the yields will be: (1) higher employee morale, (2) increased employee productivity, and (3) a reduction of employee absenteeism.

Mr. Jobe's faith in Murfreesboro's ESP is based on three perspectives:

(1) ESP best utilizes taxpayers' investments in multi-million dollar facilities. Private incentive is important too: parents pay a modest fee for their children to participate in the program.

(2) ESP is an excellent alternative to conventional child care. Employers benefit from better employee productivity. For instance, parents do not have to transport children from school to a babysitter.

(3) When private and public entities work together, the wheels turn more quickly and smoothly. Responsibility for providing child care should not be placed solely on the government's shoulders; there are many other concerns competing for its time, attention, and financial resources.

Mr. Jobe ended his remarks by saying, "Partnership between the private and the public sectors is the way of the future, linking creativity and financial resources. In my opinion, the concept of extended school is a growing example of success that we can repeat over and over in any community in America—large or small. Plainly stated—ESP works."

Mr. Ralph Vaughn, Executive Director, Rutherford/Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Mr. Vaughn said, "As our community and ... [our] country prepare for the 21st century, I believe a major component of long range planning for economic development is education. Education is the key to any economic development strategy." Mr. Vaughn believes our society must be challenged to work smarter rather than just harder, in the business arena and in the classroom. Since tomorrow's workforce will need different skills, our system and procedures for teaching must be carefully examined to ensure that both teachers and students have the necessary equipment and an environment conducive to learning. For example, the length of the school day and school year, as well as the curriculum, must be considered. In Murfreesboro, ESP is a glowing example of how time management can meet the needs of students and parents while also helping to enrich children. ESP, however, is only the beginning—the challenge is much broader than extending the school day.

While no one group or one person has all the answers for making positive changes in education, forums such as the NECTL hearings are a good beginning. Mr. Vaughn stressed the importance of developing world class standards for use as benchmarks in America. Meeting minimum standards and being average will not allow the Murfreesboro community or this country to remain a leader or act as a role model.

FIRST PANEL QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Dr. Shelton asked the panelists to turn their attention away from their local community for a moment. The Commission will have to explain its recommendations with regard to extending the school day and school year. What did the panelists feel were the measures necessary for judging the success of extended schooling?

Mr. Benefield said ESP is only a first step. Our culture and society have changed significantly since WWII, but our education system has not changed in the last 100 years. Today there are many single parent families and many parents who are not involved in their children's education. We must establish a system that will in some way substitute for what used to be—a parent at home when the school day is finished to interact with children and supervise homework.

A system that extends the school day may not necessarily extend instructional time, but it does provide time for students to do what they are supposed to do—be prepared to come to class the following day without the teacher repeating the same material for several consecutive days. Mr. Benefield thinks the standards by which other countries judge progress should be our standards. The country ought to look at countries that have longer school days and measure our progress against theirs.

Mr. Jobe added to Mr. Benefield's comments by saying, "...we have an agricultur[e]-based school system with an industrial economy. Our school system is really an outgrowth of cotton-picking days and farming days...." If we cannot evaluate whether or not it is better to extend the school day and school year for academic reasons, then we ought to at least extend schooling as necessary to meet the needs of the parents.

Mr. Jobe added that programs like ESP give some students the close contact with adults that they may not get in the classroom environment.

Mr. Doyle asked Mr. Benefield to tell the Commissioners about Nissan's Employee Dependent Care Reimbursement Accounts. Mr. Doyle specifically wanted to know more about the 127 Nissan employees who take part in the program.

Mr. Benefield explained that the Employee Dependent Care Program is a government program; employees do not pay taxes on the money used to pay for child care. Employees contribute to a fund and withdraw from it to pay for child care. Nissan does not have many employees participating in the program because Nissan's shift hours allow one parent to be home with the children.

Mr. Walker asked the panelists to discuss possible measurements for the educational benefits of ESP as opposed to the child care aspect of the program.

Mr. Benefield said it will take time to determine all the appropriate measurements. The concept and philosophy of ESP are more important than what is being done in Murfreesboro. Some measurements to consider are: a reduction in high school dropouts and an increase in the number of high school graduates going on to college without taking remedial courses.

SECOND PANEL DISCUSSION

Ms. Beth Callaway, League of Women Voters, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Ms. Callaway read the prepared testimony of Ms. Faye Johnson, Co-President of the Murfreesboro League of Voters.

For the past year the local League has been involved with the Murfreesboro City Schools ESP in Project Red, White, and Blue. The aims of the joint effort are:

(1) To help children enrolled in ESP increase their understanding of the political process;

(2) To make parents more aware of the political process by having them share in their children's learning activities;

(3) To assist parents in registering to vote; and

(4) To teach students the importance of being active, informed participants in the political process.

Project Red, White, and Blue activities have included:

- Visits by League members to Extended School Programs to explain the political process—how it works and why we as citizens should get involved and stay involved;
- Press conferences with local candidates for political offices where the children not only meet the candidates but are the "reporters" asking the questions that concern them;
- Class discussions about important issues in local, state, and national elections;
- Mock voter registration;
- Mock elections with real voting booths and simulated ballots;
- Voter registration of parents by League members;
- Political theme days designed to coincide with pertinent political issues, elections, and/or citizen responsibility; and
- Mock elections for parents conducted by their children.

This project demonstrates how a partnership between schools and concerned community groups can enhance educational opportunities for children and parents. At a time when voter participation is low and many citizens voice their disillusionment with the political process, it is imperative that children and their parents learn that their involvement is important. Project Red, White, and Blue is not only allowing children to learn and participate in the political process, but also is teaching them the value of remaining active and informed. Children are the next generation of voters: their participation can only strengthen democracy.

Ms. Beth Atkins, Extension Agent, Urban 4-H, University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

In April 1992, the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service was awarded a $95,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the establishment of a hands-on science and technology program in Murfreesboro: 4-H BEST (Building Esteem through Science and Technology).

Three separate groups collaborate in 4-H BEST: the United States Department of Agriculture, the Department of Education, and the Community Cares Project. The $95,000 grant is used to develop, conduct, and research a science and technology hands-on program. Some of the funds have been targeted to develop curriculum, purchase materials, hire and train ESP and Extension staff, and research the effect of the 4-H BEST Program on the attitudes and aptitudes of children in science. The Department of Education utilizes the Murfreesboro City Schools as project site locations for 4-H BEST. The Extended School Program students are the project's clientele.

The Community Cares project has received funds from the William Kellogg Foundation. The funds, administered through the National 4-H Council in Washington, D.C., have been utilized to develop National Education Centers for Action on university campuses throughout the United States. The National Education Centers for Action support Extension education programs. The design of the project consists of educational lessons on thematic topics that are delivered weekly.

The main objective of 4-H BEST is to make a positive difference in the lives of children through hands-on experiential education in a non-formal setting. 4-H BEST is also committed to making a difference with parents by involving them in their child's education. 4-H BEST hopes to see a positive difference in the science achievement of students as well as a positive change in their attitudes towards learning about science. This year's educational program plans for subject matter areas are: scientific inquiry, pet care, entomology, space, meteorology,

wildlife and fishery, food technology, growing plants, and birds, beasts, and bugs.

The 4-H BEST program is the first time USDA, the Department of Education, and Community Cares have collaborated to present specific subject matter with the goal of enhancing the academic achievement of children.

Ms. Monica Lewis, Director, Extended School, Bedford County Board of Education, Bedford County

Ms. Lewis began her remarks by recounting the first time she worked with ESP as a student at MTSU in 1986. Her interest and experience with ESP grew when she became a Site Director for the ESP in Tullahoma City Schools.

Tullahoma, which has four elementary schools, began the ESP in 1988. The small town has 390 children enrolled in the program. During the 1992 school year, Tullahoma opened an ESP at the two junior high schools—at the request of parents. Fifty children are enrolled in this program.

Bedford County, an industrial and agricultural community south of Murfreesboro, is in its third successful year with ESP in six elementary schools. Children enrolled in the program have the opportunity to express themselves creatively while developing better study skills, social skills, and sportsmanship.

Some of the parents in Bedford County begin working at National Pen, Calsonic, or Empire Berol at 6:30 or 7:00 a.m. Other parents drive 30 minutes to work in Murfreesboro or 50 miles to work in Nashville. These parents can travel and work with confidence, knowing their children are involved in a safe, healthy, happy, and educational program. Some children enjoy ESP so much that they ask to stay longer than their scheduled time.

Ms. Lewis recently returned from a Rotary Group Study Exchange in London, England, where she observed the educational system, which has a school year slightly longer than ours. A second language is taught to young students in the British schools; children in their third school year can speak two languages. Ms. Lewis compared the system in England to ESP, which offers languages, computers, and other educational experiences all year around.

SECOND PANEL QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Mr. Doyle prefaced his questioning by expressing his special interest in 4-H and the Agricultural Extension, because this program provides a model for delivering expert knowledge. It has clearly been a triumph in the agricultural sector. Mr. Doyle wanted additional examples from Ms. Atkins of 4-H activities that might be of interest to the Commission.

Ms. Atkins indicated that there are programs similar to 4-H BEST all over the country. In 1991, USDA set aside money that would go to specific programs that applied for grants. The programs differ because each program meets the needs of a particular community: there is a Wildlife and Fishery Program in Alaska, for example, and a day care program in inner-city Houston. The Murfreesboro program is one of the first of its type in the nation.

Mr. Doyle asked Ms. Atkins if there was an urban dimension to the program.

Ms. Atkins said, "I don't believe we always differentiate between urban and rural anymore." Tennessee has 4-H in every county. There are programs in New York City and Detroit. Ms. Lewis suggested that the Commissioners contact USDA constituents for more information on the variety of programs.

Ms. Schwartz asked about the response received by the 4-H BEST program in Bedford County. She also wondered if Bedford County had tapped MTSU for teaching staff.

Ms. Lewis explained that it is difficult for any new program to enter an existing school system, but once the transition is made, everything is fine. A community college in the Tullahoma area was tapped for teachers. There are also older citizens who work in the program. For instance, there is a state-funded Foster Grandparent Program which brings many grandmothers in to work with the children.

Ms. Schwartz asked if classroom teachers were ever disturbed because their desks and papers were being touched at the end of the day by 4-H BEST participants.

Ms. Lewis indicated that relationships and understandings between classroom teachers and ESP staff have developed over the years.

Mr. Cross asked for an explanation of ESP's funding.

Ms. Lewis said she thought a start-up grant was funded at the state level. The program Ms. Lewis is working with receives an annual grant from United Way, mostly to work with the children

who cannot afford the program. There is a scholarship fund for the children whose parents cannot afford the fees. Ms. Lewis added that a child is never turned down.

Mr. Cross asked about other funding resources for the program.

Ms. Lewis explained that the ESP in Bedford County is a fee-paid program. Parents pay a weekly fee according to the number of days and hours their children attend. This program is self-supporting.

THIRD PANEL DISCUSSION

Dr. Jane Williams, Director, Professional Laboratory Experiences, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Dr. Williams described the relationship that has been developed between MTSU and the Extended School Program of the Murfreesboro City Schools. MTSU's teacher education program includes two courses that must be taken by all education students. The courses are these: "Education as a Profession" and "Human Development and Learning." Enrollment in all sections of these two courses each semester ranges from 500 to 600 students each semester.

Each of these courses has a field component that requires students to spend time in the local public schools. "Education as a Profession" requires that students be assigned to a public school teacher as a student aide. In "Human Development and Learning," students work with one or two elementary or middle school level children as tutors. The tutoring arrangements are made through public school teachers.

The process of assigning students is complicated by two factors: (1) the sheer number of students to be placed, and (2) the lack of flexibility in the schedules of many of students.

There is often difficulty in finding enough public school placements for student aides and tutors. Many teachers are already involved in teacher education programs as cooperating teachers for student teachers and methods courses. The additional field experience requirements of these two courses place real stress on the pool of teachers available to help.

The second complicating factor is the fact that the great majority of MTSU students work as well as attending school. Often, between classes and work hours, students' daytime schedules are completely full, precluding their taking a field assignment between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. — the time the local schools are in session. It has become increasingly difficult in

recent years for students who work in the daytime to complete their field experiences.

The answer to both of these difficulties has been Murfreesboro's ESP program. MTSU assigns students whose schedules pose problems for regular school day placements to the ESP schools between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. In addition, each semester the students in the two required education courses who cannot be placed in the regular school program for field experience are assigned to the ESP program. Student placements in ESP each semester number as many as 100 students.

The ESP program is a lifesaver for MTSU. The MTSU education teacher program would not be able to continue its field placement program in its current form if it did not have access to the expanded school schedule provided by ESP.

In addition to the benefits described, the ESP program allows MTSU to tailor its field experience to course content. In the course on "Human Development and Learning," students study the stages of development of children and how they learn. The intent of the field experience is to give students in that course an opportunity to apply the theories they study in class. The students are assigned to tutor children in the basic skills, in essence providing a laboratory in which the students can observe first hand the developmental characteristics of children.

The ESP program is ideal for this type of activity. In their ESP assignment, tutors work with individual students, helping them with basic skills development or assisting them with their homework. No other setting in the public schools allows MTSU students quite the same opportunity for concentrated one-on-one interaction.

In summary, the ESP program offers MTSU several advantages:

(1) The experiences of MTSU students involve them in direct application of the theory they learn in class;

(2) The scheduling format of the ESP program enables students to complete their field work in the late afternoons, thereby avoiding disruption of their school and work schedules; and

(3) ESP's willingness to take MTSU students means that there are always enough placement opportunities available, even when enrollment is excessive.

One last benefit is an administrative one. The MTSU teacher education office is currently engaged in processing as many as 1,000 field placements each semester. It has been extremely helpful to MTSU that, in ESP's case, placements can be coordinated through a central office.

The children in Murfreesboro's ESP have benefitted as well from their contact with MTSU teacher education students. They receive one-on-one interaction they would not otherwise enjoy, and that attention is focused on their specific academic needs.

The relationship between MTSU and the ESP program is a positive example of the cooperation that can be fostered between the theoretical world of pre-service teacher education and the real world practice of the public schools.

Ms. Sue Bordine, Assistant Principal, Mitchell-Neilson Elementary School, Murfreesboro City School System

Ms. Bordine discussed three main components of the ESP: (1) Homework, (2) Summer Opportunities (OPT), and (3) Enrichment.

HOMEWORK

After the children have had a snack and about 15 minutes to run and play outside, they have the option of going to a program called Homework. Taught by a certified teacher, the children receive academic help, their completed work is checked, and they then return to their ESP group or remain in the Homework room.

Ms. Bordine provided the following sampling of comments by teachers who are currently supervising in Homework rooms:

- Sometimes children have no one to help them with homework at home.
- Students do not always have the reference material needed at home.
- There is a real advantage to children doing their homework when concepts are fresh in their mind.
- Children look forward to going to the homework room for one-on-one personal attention.
- Even though there are other exciting activities going on, children occasionally choose to bring a book to read if they do not have homework because the atmosphere is conducive to reading and studying.
- Children are involved in activities after ESP, so by getting homework out of the way, they are free for

these activities (i.e., ballet, baseball, or quality time with parents).

Ms. Bordine has also surveyed ESP children and parents about the Homework program. Children stated they were glad to "finish up" their assignments before going home. Many parents stated that they appreciated the opportunity their sons/daughters had to finish their school work during ESP.

SUMMER OPT

"Summer OPT" refers to classes held under the ESP umbrella during summer months. "OPT" is short for opportunities. Children from ESP attend four-hour academic sessions for either four or eight weeks. The emphasis is on reading or math. The sessions are taught through hands-on activities and games whenever possible. If children have been unable to learn well during the school year, this approach gives them alternative ways to learn and to succeed.

In the multi-level reading classes, the whole language approach is used, with art, social studies, science, and so on being incorporated into the reading curriculum. Reading becomes more relevant to children's lives. Children who are one-half level behind and attend a full eight weeks, passing the assessments, are able to catch up to the grade level in the fall.

ENRICHMENT

Enrichment also affects the overall academics of the children. Activities are varied and include karate, foreign languages, art, computer, crafts, music, sports, etc. At one site, a parent requested piano lessons for his child. Our music teacher now stays four days a week giving private piano lessons to children until 5:00 p.m.

One regular school applied, along with ESP, for a Tennessee Arts Commission grant. Murfreesboro thinks this combined effort on the part of a regular school program and an extended school program to receive a grant was probably a first. The application was successful. As a result of this grant, two trained artists in residence were able to work with the children partially during the regular school day and partially during ESP. The visual arts and performing arts were enhanced, and these activities helped to promote a positive self-image among the children.

As the roles and needs of the American family have changed dramatically, the Murfreesboro City Schools have made a sincere attempt to provide a reassuring and educationally sound environment for children from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Wendy Day Rowell, ESP Parent, Mitchell-Neilson Elementary School, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Ms. Rowell introduced herself to the Commissioners by explaining that hers is a single income family. Ms. Rowell's children were in a babysitting and private day care situation for four years. Ms. Rowell thinks the private day care situation was expensive, unstable, and generally unhealthy for building social skills. Ms. Rowell said her boys were "clingy and socially atrophied." The day care director blamed it on "the broken home syndrome."

Ms. Rowell contacted the ESP program at 6:00 a.m. one Monday morning in tears. The Site Director listened to Ms. Rowell's situation and worked the children into an already full summer program. From the first day of ESP, Ms. Rowell's sons blossomed. She added that the children in ESP are never treated like babies and favoritism does not exist.

During their primary term with ESP, Ms. Rowell's sons went swimming, skating, took karate, Spanish, guitar, violin, and made a Christmas album (ESPecially for You at Christmas). Ms. Rowell explained that ESP also has activities for older children: golf, tennis, basketball, baseball, going to the movies, etc. In some cases, male staff members provide the only male role models for ESP children.

Ms. Rowell pointed out that the ESP staff have stuck with her through good times and bad. At one period, Ms. Rowell was unemployed and her ex-husband stopped paying child support. Ms. Rowell was encouraged by ESP staff to keep her children in the program for their stability and her peace of mind. Ms. Rowell was able to focus on securing employment and is currently employed, able to concentrate on her job without worrying about day care.

Ms. Rowell closed her remarks by admitting that she got involved with the ESP program unwillingly; she did not understand the program and didn't want her children in school for 12 hours a day. Today she is grateful for ESP.

THIRD PANEL QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Dr. Shelton asked Dr. Williams if extending the school year would have implications for the vast number of teachers in America who work on advanced degrees during the summer months.

Dr. Williams said, "The way we are set up now at MTSU, we already have difficulty because we get 4,000 to 5,000 folks back on campus in the summer time, many of whom are teachers. When there are too many snow days, we wind up starting summer session with half our folks coming in the second week." The way MTSU is

currently set up is not flexible for acts of God, much less ... [year-round school systems]." Dr. Williams is in favor of year-round schooling. The challenge for MTSU should be to figure out other ways of offering its summer courses. Students may be required to come to school for different configurations of hours on different days.

Ms. Schwartz asked Ms. Rowell to discuss her opinion of the ESP fees.

Ms. Rowell said it was not difficult to meet the fees. In fact, she saved $35 a week by placing her children in ESP instead of in private day care. Ms. Rowell said she thought she had paid $45 for morning and afternoon care for the two children per week. Initially, Ms. Rowell paid a nominal fee, but she has been able to increase the amount.

Mr. Cross asked Ms. Bordine to discuss any data comparing the academic achievement of students who are in ESP with the achievement of those who are not.

Ms. Bordine was unaware of any collected data but indicated that there had been discussion of the need to develop studies.

Mr. Cross told Ms. Bordine that such data would be interesting and valuable to the Commission.

FOURTH PANEL DISCUSSION

Ms. Becci Bookner, Director, Extended School Program and Community Education

Ms. Bookner told the Commissioners that work on the Murfreesboro model of ESP began in the Spring of 1985. In January 1986, ESP became operational with four children at Hobgood Elementary School. Today all eight elementary schools have an extended school program, with more than 1,900 children throughout the system participating. Consistent growth during the school year has been a pattern with ESP. During the 1991-1992 school year, the 2,000th child was enrolled in April. The projection for this year is to reach an ESP population of 2,000 children before January 1993.

ESP was developed around five fundamental issues. They are:

(1) Parents are concerned with their children's safety and well-being before and after school.

(2) Education leaders and taxpayers want to better utilize expensive school facilities and other resources.

(3) Business leaders want their employees to be productive instead of preoccupied with the stress of wondering about a child's activities and/or safety.

(4) Schools must demonstrate accountability not only in academic achievement but also in total services rendered. These must be "calendar continuous" school services — they must be available to youngsters and parents in an ongoing manner (no down time or built-in efficiencies such as summer vacation, etc.).

(5) If the $30 billion cost of closing schools, based on a 180-day year with the school day defined in terms of seven hours (a one-shift-only operation), were redirected, this change alone could revolutionize the K-12 American school system.

There are significant reasons why the Murfreesboro model of Extended School works, and works without additional taxpayer money. It works because the model is simple and because it makes good sense. It also works because of the following:

- There is a tremendous need for affordable top-quality day care for working parents.

- There is an absolute necessity for more quality instruction time and enrichment opportunities for youngsters.

- The Murfreesboro school board and the superintendent had the courage to stand strong and dare to alter the "cast in stone" operational hours of a 200-year-old institution.

Quite simply, Murfreesboro chose to stop looking at the reason why schools could not operate on a different schedule. In 1985, it searched for options that allowed the creation of schools for the next century that work now. It is Murfreesboro's belief that communities solve their own problems and do not depend on dollars and dictates from Washington or the state.

For the Murfreesboro community, ESP is certainly the solution to the school-age child care dilemma. It is important to note that in this framework, child care is the by-product of a program that falls under the auspices of the school, school administration, and Board of Education. The child care by-product is the exclusive financial resource for funding ESP. The cash-flow operation places the pressure of artful and accountable management where it is most effective...with the "stockholders"...an interesting new role for public school parents.

The success of the Murfreesboro program has implications far greater than the city itself. ESP is a giant voluntary step in the direction of true education reform. More importantly, ESP can serve as the spring board for a fundamental revolution in the delivery of public school services. It is a public school "satisfaction measuring" device for concerned citizenry, parents, and pupils. It embodies patron ownership because parents pay for the service and they are in the school buildings on a daily basis.

The future just might belong to the school systems and other public institutions that recognize, appreciate, and aggressively accommodate the enormous needs and extraordinary challenges of the working American family in 1992. In dealing with families, schools must remember the young and older adults who fell and continue to fall between the cracks of our instructional scheme. From now on the term "student" must include more than family members between the ages of 5 and 18.

The ultimate message of vouchers, choice, the Whittle initiative, etc., may be the last wake-up call for public education. No one can disagree with the premise that learning is "full-time, year-round, and life-long." Murfreesboro believes that "the best is yet to come" for its youngsters, their parents, adult students, and taxpayers. The proposed Cason Lane school will incorporate, by facility design, curriculum design, and community design, the ultimate extended school. The school will have:

- K-8 organization;
- Freedom of choice enrollment;
- Year-round calendar;
- Operation determined by program needs rather than school bus transportation needs;
- Flexible schedule for teachers and students;
- Extensive use of the 30-acre campus for recreational activities similar to and in cooperation with the City Recreation Department; and
- Paideia concept of academic studies balanced with an emphasis on the whole child.

It is unfortunate that Murfreesboro City Schools do not have a high school program. The work and philosophy of ESP, if adapted to the high school environment, could render services that are needed more dramatically at that level than for the elementary student.

The Extended School Program, with its continuous calendar, enables the school system to successfully accommodate working parents. It is open 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily in all eight of schools. One facility continues operating until 8:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday for family learning.

The bottom line for Murfreesboro City Schools and ESP is a commitment to provide the highest quality of service to children and parents.

FOURTH PANEL QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Dr. Goldberg thanked Ms. Bookner for the enormous amount of work she performed in arranging the Commissioners' visit to the area.

Commissioner Barrett began the discussion by asking Ms. Bookner to explain how the school choice program is woven into other elements of the program.

Ms. Bookner explained that when the Cason Lane School is open, parents will have the option of choosing that school based on the school's offerings. Ms. Bookner mentioned that while parents are very happy with their particular ESP school during the regular school year, because of transportation, work location, and other issues, parents may wish to choose a different school for the summer.

Ms. Schwartz told Ms. Bookner that the Murfreesboro City School System, the Commission, and the nation would benefit from data on improvements in academic achievement associated with the ESP. Ms. Schwartz suggested comparisons between ESP children and children not attending ESP. People want data when considering the financial impact of such programs on the school systems.

Ms. Schwartz encouraged the data collection process as soon as possible so that the Commission can include it in the final report.

Ms. Bookner indicated that the process of tracking extended school children based on achievement testing began last year. The framework is in place, but there are no results at this point.

Mr. Doyle had a series of questions for Ms. Bookner to respond to verbally or in writing. They were:

(1) Are there any provisions for or considerations of the needs of families who fall below the poverty threshold? Are there sliding scale scholarships?

(2) What about preschool? There is a demonstrable need for parents to have youngsters from a very early age cared for. In some respects, the need is even more critical than for older youngsters.

(3) Have there been day care provider complaints from the private sector?

(4) Has Murfreesboro considered the use of parent advisory boards in its operations? Would they be useful or not?

(5) Has Murfreesboro considered, or would it be possible to think about, parenting education?

(7) Has there been consideration of parent participation/outreach? Some programs require parent participation, either as a token in lieu of financial support or in addition to financial support as a token of commitment.

Mr. Doyle said he agreed with other Commissioners that achieving some sophistication in the presentation of data would be desirable. Mr. Doyle added that ESP "clearly passed the market test" — people want its services.

Ms. Bookner said she could address all of Mr. Doyle's questions except the one concerning parent outreach. Due to the late hour, Ms. Bookner suggested discussing the questions on the following day.

Dr. Goldberg informed Ms. Bookner of the Commission's intention not to restrict its information-gathering to the hearings themselves. Any individuals in the audience with information relevant to the Commissioners' deliberations were encouraged to forward that information to the Commission via Chairman Jones.

Ms. Bookner responded to the issue of private day care. Since 1986, three or four top quality day care facilities have opened in Murfreesboro — most of them are full. An entrepreneur opened a day care center across the street from Black Fox School. Initially there were some concerns about competition and which program is better, but clearly the winner is the child and the family. ESP has not hurt the private providers of child care; they still have all of the preschool market.

Commissioner Cross asked about the operation of Head Start and its articulation with ESP. Mr. Cross also wanted to know how the needs of children who left the city schools at grade six and went on to middle schools without an extended school program were met.

Ms. Bookner took note of the questions.

Commissioner Byers asked for information about the programs for family learning.

Ms. Bookner cited the Northfield Elementary School. The principal of that school encouraged ESP to develop a use for the computer lab after hours. Now adult learners in the community use the lab. The program works with a broad range of adults, from beginning readers up through those interested in G.E.D. preparation and computer literacy. The program has enjoyed great success since its beginning in March.

Ms. Bookner asked Chairman Jones if Ms. Norris, principal of Northfield Elementary School, could speak for a few moments about the adult learners. Ms. Norris said the program has been very rewarding. Approximately 10 adults have received their G.E.D.'s thus far. ESP has provided a child care program, so the parents so are able to come to the program in the computer lab without worrying about their children.

Mr. Higgins asked Ms. Bookner if she was aware of any extended school programs in Tennessee or Rutherford County that are designed or contemplated for students on a K-12 basis.

Ms. Bookner said some systems have expanded to include the junior high level, but she did not know of any high schools involved. Ms. Bookner added that high schools already have some extended school programs, such as athletics, but they need to do more.

Mr. Higgins responded that part of the success of the Murfreesboro ESP stems from the fact that it is funded through fees. Might not secondary schools have difficulty in generating fees from parents to support extended school programs? Mr. Higgins thinks that at the secondary or upper elementary levels, more traditional funding sources might be relied upon.

Ms. Bookner said, "I suspect if you're creative in your design, the students would pay. I mean, they work now, so they have the money. That would be a possibility."

LIST OF ATTENDEES

Commissioners

The Honorable Michael J. Barrett, State Senator, Massachusetts

Mrs. Marie Byers, past President of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education

Mr. Christopher T. Cross, Executive Director of the Education Initiative of The Business Roundtable

Mr. Denis Doyle, Senior Fellow, The Hudson Institute

Mr. Norman E. Higgins, Principal of Piscataquis Community High School, Guilford, Maine

Dr. John Hodge Jones, Chairman, NECTL, and Superintendent of Schools, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Ms. Carol Schwartz, Vice Chair, NECTL, and former member of the District of Columbia Board of Education and City Council

Dr. William E. Shelton, President of Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Michigan

Mr. Glenn R. Walker, principal of Clifton-Clyde High School, Concordia, Kansas

Speakers

Ms. Beth Atkins, Extension Agent, Urban 4-H, University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

Mr. Jerry Benefield, President and CEO, Nissan Motor Manufacturing Corp., USA, Smyrna, Tennessee

Ms. Becci Bookner, Director, Extended School Program and Community Education

Ms. Sue Bordine, Assistant Principal, Mitchell-Neilson Elementary School, Murfreesboro City School System

Ms. Beth Callaway, League of Women Voters, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Mr. Joel Jobe, Managing Partner, Jobe, Turley, and Associates, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Ms. Monica Lewis, Director, Extended School, Bedford County Board of Education, Bedford County

Ms. Wendy Day Rowell, ESP Parent, Mitchell-Neilson Elementary School, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Mr. Ralph Vaughn, Executive Director, Rutherford/Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Dr. Jane Williams, Director, Professional Laboratory Experiences, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Commission Staff

Dr. Milton Goldberg, Executive Director

Ms. Julia Anderson, Deputy Executive Director

Dr. Cheryl Kane, Research Coordinator

Ms. Anita Madan Renton, Research Associate for International Studies